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Photographs of people who disappeared during the dictatorship during a march. AGRA Collection, Active Memory Archive, extracted from http://elthot.wordpress.com/tag/golpe-militar/.

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Front and profile images, “truth” and memory. From the engravings of the Beagle (1839) and anthropological photography (late 19th century) to identification photos today

Frontal and Profile Photographs, the “Truth” and the Memory. From the Beagle Etchings (1839) and the Anthropological Photography (by the End of the 19th Century) to the Current Identification Photos

The face and profile images, “truth” and memory. The engravings of the Beagle (1839) and anthropological photography (finals of the 19th century) and identification photos in our days

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This article is the product of the research project “Travel books: visuality, knowledge and mastery of America”, funded by the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Summary

The article proposes an analysis of the front and profile typology from the 19th century to the present. Based on a reflection on the photographic image and its relation to truth and memory, a three-time journey is undertaken, considering the official report of the so-called Voyage of the Beagle and the engravings that illustrate it (1826-1836), the photographs taken of members of the defeated Patagonian indigenous groups after the military campaigns that began in Argentina in 1879, and some cases of appropriation of the typology by artists and human rights activists in the last thirty years. Between the engravings and the photos, a tension is verified between the conception proper to romanticism, in which the transformation of the Indians is contemplated by means of civilizing education, and a positivist vision that supposes the objectification of the indigenous bodies placed under scientific investigation. For their part, contemporary cases pose a shift in the interpretation of the role of representation in the construction of a historical memory: the posthumous nature of photography coexists with another dimension linked to its capacity to give renewed existence to the dead and ensure a transcendence that defies any tendency to forget.

Keywords

Photography, Front, Profile, Truth, Memory

Keywords descriptor

Photography-History, Visual Anthropology, Collective Memory

Abstract

The article proposes an analysis of front and profile typologies from the 19th century to these days. From a reflection on the photo-graphic image and its relationship with truth and memory, a three-stage review is outlined taking into account the official report of the so-called Beagle journey and the et-chings that illustrate it (1826-1836), the pho-tographs taken to the Patagonian indigenous groups who were defeated after the military campaigns started in 1879 in Argentina as well as some cases of artists and human rights activists who appropriated the typology in the last 30 years. In the etchings and photographs, a tension between the romanticism conception and a positivistic point of view is evidenced.

On the one hand, the Indian transformation through a civilizational education contrasted, on the other hand, with the objectivation of the indigenous bodies entrusted to scienti-fic inquiry. On their behalf, the contemporary cases pose a shift in the interpretation of the representation in the construction of a histori-cal memory: the posthumous nature of photography getting along with another dimension linked to its capacity of giving a renewed existence to the dead and ensuring a transcendence that defines forgetfulness.

Keywords

Photography, Front, Profile, Truth, Memory

Keywords plus

Picture-History, Visual anthropology, Collective memory

Summary

The article proposes an analysis of the typology of face and profile from the 19th century to leaf. Starting from a reflection on the photographic image and its relationship with the truth and memory, a journey is made in three tempos, considering the official report of the journey of the Eagle and the gravels that it illustrates (1826-1836), as photographs taken by members of two defeated Patagonian indigenous groups After the military campaigns that began in Argentina in 1879 and some cases of appropriation of typology by artists and activists of human rights in the last thirty years. Between the engravings and the photos, there is a tension between the conception of romanticism, which foresees the transformation of the Indians by means of civilized education and a po-sitivist vision that knows the objectiveness of two indigenous bodies based on scientific research.

As such, the contemporary cases show a change in the interpretation of the role of representation in the construction of a historical memory: the posthumous character of the photograph coexists with another dimension linked to its capacity to give renewed existence to the dead and ensure a transcendence that de-fies any attempt at a sketch.

Keywords

Photography, Face, Profile, Truth, Memory

Descriptive words

Picture-History, An anthropology, A visual collective memory

SICI: 0122-5197(201307)17:35<17:IFPVYM>2.0.TX;2-

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Fig. 1.
Photograph from Julio Popper's album, 1887. Samuel Rimathé album, Luis Priamo collection.

Photography, “truth” and memory

Many years ago, during my training as a researcher, I was struck by a photographic image that I found reproduced in one of the books I was consulting (Fig. 1). At that time, several questions arose that have since permeated my work: the first is related to the definition of a *corpus* in which I would investigate the representation of indigenous people in 19th-century Argentine art. The photo made me understand that it was not possible to focus on “strictly artistic” production, exemplified in a canonical painting such as *La vuelta del malón,* which Ángel Della Valle painted in 1892 (Fig. 2), without paying attention to a broader universe of images that belonged to the same visual culture. Della Valle’s painting represents a key period in the history of Argentine art, whose protagonists Laura Malosetti has studied as “first moderns”1

At the confluence of academic language and romantic subject matter, Della Valle visually captures one of the central themes of 19th-century Argentine culture: the malones (attacks by indigenous people against white populations) and the abduction of white women by indigenous people, framed in the epic struggle of “civilization” against “barbarism”2 . The scene, with great dynamism achieved by the movement of the galloping horses and the diagonals of the lances carried by the characters, takes place in the middle of the pampas, represented by the flat horizon that divides the composition in two. The overcast sky, the muddy ground and the bones that cover the ground complete an ominous scene. Painted after the campaign carried out by the State against the indigenous people of the pampas and Patagonia, when there was no longer

1 Laura Malosetti Costa, *The First Moderns. Art and Society in Buenos Aires at the End of the 19th* Century (Buenos Aires: fce, 2000).

2 The natives spoke of the “white raid” to refer to the army’s incursions into the villages; see Laura Malosetti Costa, *Abduction of White Captives. An Erotic Aspect of Barbarism in 19th* -Century Rioplatense Art (Buenos Aires: Institute of Argentine Literature, FFyL-uba, 1994); Marta Penhos, “19th-Century Indians . Nomination and Representation,” in *The Arts in the Debate of the Fifth Centenary* (Buenos Aires: CAIA/ FFyL-uba, 1992).

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Fig. 2.
Angel Della Valle, *The Return of the Raid,* 1892, oil on canvas, 186.5 x 292 cm. National Museum of Fine Arts, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

the danger of the raids, "the painting presented an unequivocal and moving configuration of meaning, as regards the symbolic justification of that war of extermination"3 .

The belonging of this work to the history of art in Argentina is not disputed, while other images remain outside this canon, leading us to think about the relationships between art history and visual studies, and the specificity of the former in terms of its objects and approaches.

The second question that the photograph with which I began this journey provokes is of a different order. When observing it, the following questions arise insistently: what is it that leads a human being to exercise this type of violence on another? How is it possible for this to happen? What discourses support and legitimize these actions? The problem acquires a precise formulation if we pay attention to the role of the image in the construction of functional alterities in asymmetrical and hierarchical power systems: is the image the mere record of the violence of whites (be they Europeans or members of the ruling elites of Argentina) against indigenous people? Or does photography, a specific image as a technique and as a medium, enable an analysis of the status of truth of what the image exhibits?

To explore possible answers to these questions, we will take into account both the witnessing and designation properties that can be attributed to photographs4 , as well as their evocative power, linked to the construction of individual and collective memories5 .

Let us then return to look at figure 1. Located in an arid landscape, a group of men in uniform aim their weapons at something that is off-screen. Only one of them remains standing almost in the centre of the image with his rifle at rest. This is Julius Popper, a Romanian businessman and adventurer who in 1887 obtained a permit to exploit gold deposits on the island of Rio Grande in Tierra del Fuego. He went on to command a small army and mint coins. His responsibility for the massacre of the Fuegian Indians is a fact that is evident in the film.

3 Malosetti Costa, *The First Moderns,* 268.

4 Philippe Dubois mentions three principles linked to certain functions of photography: singularity, witnessing and de-signation, which derive from its condition as an index or trace of the referent: *The photographic act. From representation to reception* (Barcelona: Paidós, 1986), 65-72. Michel Frizot, despite strongly questioning Dubois's semiotic starting point, agrees with him when he recognizes "the testimonial power of photography": "what is attested is the presence of an object, a person, or a conjunction of presences in space" and in time. *The Photographic Imaginary* (Mexico: Serieve, 2009), 72-73.

5 If your ability to select a reference field and give-
Visibility as an event links photography to history, its ability to fix something and collect it, put it in relation to other fragments, create archives, enables it as an instrument of memory (Frizot, *The Photographic Imaginary,* 73-74).

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It emerges from the lectures and publications made by Popper himself, who gave the Argentine president Miguel Ángel Juárez Celman the album containing, among others, four photographs with the sequence of the "hunt"6 .

The photographic medium establishes a tension between indexical character and iconicity7, producing in the current spectator a double response to the image: confidence in the truth of what is seen there (and therefore horror), and awareness of the distance that separates us from it8 and that allows us to alleviate, although only in part, that horror9 . To the Once we know that the documentary value of this photo is based on an effective staging, we cannot ignore the "truth" it contains.

According to Dubois, despite the constructive aspect of photos, they still have a singular relationship with the referent; the photographic image is inseparable from the act that founds it.10 Now, what is that act? What truth did the image capture? The technology of the time made taking a snapshot very difficult, but the image seems to be the result of decisions that exceed that limitation. The balance between horizontals and verticals is achieved thanks to the strip of land that divides the photo into two almost equal halves and the patterned distribution of the "soldiers" and Popper himself. Below this, standing out for its clarity Against the background of vegetation, there is the naked and inert body of an indigenous person. All of this, plus the framing and the point of view, form part of a deliberate composition, that is to say a reconstruction of the event, whether it was a hunt or a confrontation. Between the photographic image and the referent there is a relationship of necessity, yes, but it is a relationship pregnant with opacities that are difficult to ignore. This aspect, far from attenuating the force of the testimony, intensifies it: for the shot, Popper *must* have been in that part of the Tierra del Fuego geography, accompanied by his men, at the moment of unfolding, of replenishing, the violence of the original act. This unfolding is enabled by the camera-"predatory weapons" correlation that Sontag points out, insofar as the former, in a similar way to firearms, responds "to the slightest pressure of the will." Photographing people "transforms them into objects that can be symbolically possessed […] to photograph someone is to commit a sublimated murder, a soft murder" 13, which in our case follows the real murder and duplicates it.

We can say then that, certainly, this image is a record of the atrocities committed against the Selk'nam by individuals supported directly or indirectly by the Chilean and Argentine states. However, I seek to go beyond this reading. As Sontag says, thanks to its appearance

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6 See among others Boleslao Lewin, *Who was the Patagonian Conquistador Julio Popper?* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Plus Ultra, 1974); Bernard D. Ansel, "European Adventurer in Tierra del Fuego: Julio Popper," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 50, no. 1 (1970). On the photographs, see Juan Gómez, "Julio Popper. A contradictory character in our Tierra del Fuego", *Proceedings of the 5th Congress on the History of Photography in Argentina* (Buenos Aires, 1996). To date, I have not been able to locate the album in Buenos Aires. For this reason, I am especially grateful to Luis Priamo for having given me access to the copy of the photograph in question that is in his collection.

7 Jean Marie Schaeffer defines the photographic image as *an indexical icon,* posing the coexistence between the iconic – the relationship of similarity between the image and the object – and the indexical – the physical relationship between the image and the object. See *The Precarious Image. On the Photographic Device* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1990), especially chapter 2: "The Indexical Icon."

8 The concept of *distance* takes on different meanings depending on the author being considered. Dubois poses it as one of the limits of the notion of index, as a distance in space – "what is seen in the film is never there" – and in time – "no simultaneity is possible between the object and its image", and it is synonymous with cut, with separation *(The Photographic Act,* 84-89). For Frizot it is "the gap that separates photographic representation from human perceptions", which we tend to overlap by granting certain photographs the capacity to show the world as it is: "the photographic image is a reduction and a sample of a supposed 'reality' that overflows it" *(The Photographic Imaginary,* 74-75). Rosalind Krauss proposes to think about the distance that separates photography from other systems of representation. *The photographic. For a theory of displacements* (Barcelona: Gustavo Gili, 2002).

9 Susan Sontag introduces the idea that the distance that opens up in-between us and the image, after the initial horror, has the effect of anesthetizing our reactions to the representation of human suffering. *On Photography* (Buenos Aires: Alfaguara, 2006), 37-39.

10 Dubois, *The Photographic Act,* 21. Sontag, despite recognizing the im- The principles of taste and the role of pictorial models in the work of photographers, he states that "a photograph – any photograph – It seems to establish a more naive, and therefore more precise, relationship with visible reality than other mimetic objects" *(On Photography,* 19).

11 Carolina Odone and Marisol Palma also understand it this way; see "Indigenous Death: Tierra del Fuego (1886-1887)," *Visual Anthropology,* no. 4 (2004): 433. http://www.antropologiavisual.cl/odone_& _palma.htm#Layer8 (accessed December 10, 2012).

12 On March 5, 1887, Popper gave a lecture at the Institute to Geográfico Argentino, in which he showed more than 100 photographs taken during his first stay in Tierra del Fuego and recounted the "confrontation" between his troops and some 80 Selk'nam; see, among others, Odone and Palma, "La muerte indígena," 432.

13 Sontag, *On Photography,* 30-31.

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mechanical, automatic, “the act of photographing is something more than passive observation”14. That is to say, what is traditionally associated with the neutrality of photography is one of the factors that intervene by segregating the photographer from the photographed, who are “something” to be seen in the image, a very eloquent situation when it comes to indigenous people. We are not talking then about objectivity but rather about objectification or reification. In this sense, we attribute to photography an agency15, an active and decisive role in the process of incorporation of certain territories that had remained outside the effective domain of the Spanish empire first and of the national States later, from the mid-nineteenth century. Following this approach, we can analyze Popper’s image and others like it as constituent elements of the degradation to which some human beings were subjected, distinguishing between the agency implicit in the act of taking the photo and that which functions in the image that is derived from that act over the years16. This is a distinction correlative to that which exists between the image and the practice to which it refers, of which we only retain that trace17 , which shows us that both the fiction and the indication that we identify in the photograph refer to a double dimension of the image: historical, since it belongs to the moment in which it was created, and transhistorical, linked to the vicissitudes of its life, to its reception and reading through time, which places us in the realm of memory.

This is what allows us to question images, since it “humanizes and configures time” and “ensures its transmissions”18.

I will now put Popper's photograph in relation to a set of images belonging to a typology: front and profile views. Although it may not be possible to fully answer the question of how something like what we see in this photo could have happened, the

14 Sontag, *On Photography,* 28-30.

15 See Alfred Gell, *Art and agency* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

16 This double story is pointed out by Odone and Palma, “Indigenous Death,” 427-428.

17 Roger Chartier, *The World as Representation: Cultural History: Between Practice and Representation* (Barcelona: Gedisa, 1996).

18 Georges Didi-Huberman, *Before Time. History of art and analysis chronicle* (Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo, 2006), opening.

The following reflection aims to bring together elements to understand some of the aspects of a phenomenon from the past that has echoes in more recent events, in which the image has participated in various ways (the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, the repression of dictatorships in Latin America, among others).

I propose a three-part tour, taking first the official report of the Beagle's voyage and the engravings that illustrate it (1826-1836).

A second moment will be devoted to photographs taken of members of the indigenous Patagonian groups defeated after the military campaigns that began in Argentina in 187919. Between the engravings and the photographs, a tension is seen between the conception of Romanticism, which contemplates the transformation of the Indians through civilizing education, and a positivist vision that supposes the objectification of indigenous bodies subject to scientific investigation.

Finally, the third and last point is made up of some cases of appropriation of the typology by artists and human rights activists in the last thirty years, which suggests a shift in the interpretation of the role of this type of images in the construction of a historical memory.

Front and profile: the educational experiment

“Fuegian (Yapoo Tekeenica)” is found in the frontispiece of volume II of *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of his Majestic's ships Adventure and Beagle…20,* published in 1839 (Fig. 3). The long report reveals the results of the two stages of the voyage (1826-1830 and 1831-1836). The engraving introduces the content with which Captain Fitz-Roy decides to begin the text, focused on the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego and elaborated

19 These cases are addressed in Marta Penhos, “Traveling Images: from the Beagle Expedition to *L'Univers Pittoresque,”* in *Viajes. Spaces and Bodies in Argentina in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries,* Irina Podgorny *et al.* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Biblioteca Nacional/ Teseo, 2009); and Marta Penhos, “Front and Profile. Photography and Anthropological and Criminological Practices in Argentina in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries,” in *Art and Anthropology in Argentina,* Marta Penhos *et al.* (Buenos Aires: Fundación Espigas/ Fundación Telefónica/fiaar, 2005).

20 *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of his Majestic's ships Adventure and Beagle... in three volumes* (London: Henry Colburn, 1839).

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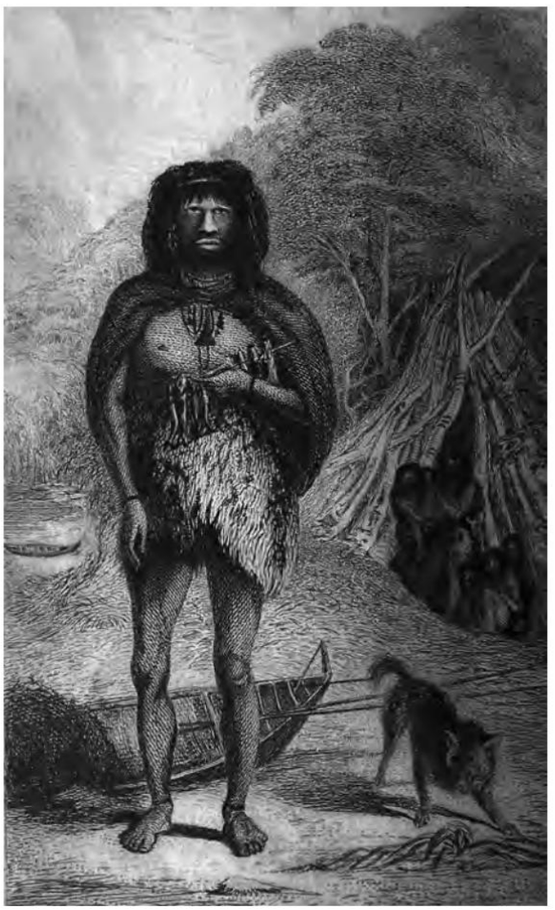

Fig. 3.
Fuegian, Yapoo Tekeenica, engraving from the edition of *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of his Majestic's ships Adventure and Beagle... in three volumes,* 1839, volume II. National Library of the Argentine Republic.

based on his own experience with those he calls “my Fuegians companions” or “our copper-coloured friends”21: the two young men, the teenager and the girl, named by the English York Minster, Boat Memory, Jemmy Button and Fuegia Basket, kidnapped on the first voyage and taken to England in order to be instructed in Christian values, the English language and Western customs, and to serve as interpreters and intermediaries on future expeditions. Since the mid-twentieth century, the story has been taken up in various ways, either in works of historical reconstruction or as part of literary elaborations.22

The study of indigenous people from a moral perspective is one of Fitz-Roy's greatest interests, in addition to those pertaining to his mission.

Shortly after beginning the text, after making some notes on navigation on the equator, the sailor addresses the subject of the four hostages23.

The following pages recount the events experienced by the Fuegians during their stay in England. Of the twenty-five plates in the volume, four are dedicated to the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego, and one of them shows York Minster, Jemmy Button and Fuegia Basket.

Chapter VII, entitled “Southern Aborigines of South America,” begins a long section, which extends into Chapter X, which addresses a variety of aspects of the region’s population: head size and measurements, physiognomy, clothing, weapons, social patterns, housing, food, religious beliefs and practices, “superstitions,” language, and the narration of the failed attempt to found a mission under the charge of the Reverend Matthews in which the hostages would live after being reintegrated into their habitat. Interspersed is a sheet with the portrait of six individuals from different groups (Fig. 4). The engraving partially collects the information that Fitz-Roy provides about the “tribes,” which are identified by their names in Chapter VII: “Tehuel-he” or “Patagonians,” “Yacana,” “Tekeenica,” “Alikhoolip,” “Pecheray,” “Huemul,” “Chonos”24. Some of these groups are represented in the plate by means of the head or bust from the front or in profile. We will see immediately that the plate with the hostages is presented in a similar way: “Fuegians-Yacana, Pecheray, & c.” and “Fuegians-York Minster, & c.”. Both are different from other images that include indigenous people, in which the figures appear in a natural and social context, or illustrating a narrative episode.

These, on the other hand, dispense with any spatial indication to concentrate on the faces of those portrayed, in the manner of a study that is half artistic, half scientific.

21 *Narrative,* volume II, 1-2.

22 Among others: Benjamín Subercaseaux, *Jemmy Button,* 1950; Nick Hazelwood, *Savage, The life and times of Jemmy Button,* 2000 (has a Spanish edition in Edhasa); Harry Thompson, *This Thing of Darkness,* 2005; Peter Nichols, *Evolution's Captain. The Dark Fate of the Man Who Sailed* Charles *Darwin Fitz-Roy. The dramatic confrontation of two worlds aboard the Beagle,* Temas de Hoy, 2004); Eduardo Belgrano Rawson, *Fuegia,* 1991; Sylvia Iparraguirre, *The Land of Fire,* 1998.

23 *Narrative,* volume II, 4-7.

24 *Narrative,* volume II, 133.

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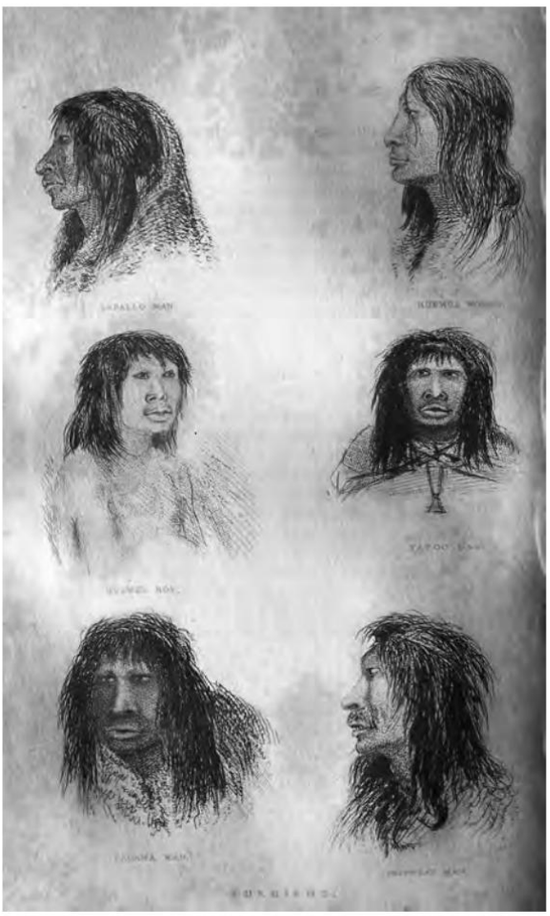

Fig. 4.
Fuegians, engraving from the edition of *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of his Majestic's ships Adventure and Beagle... in three volumes,* 1839, volume II. National Library of the Argentine Republic.

Fig. 5.
Fuegians, engraving from the edition of *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of his Majestic's ships Adventure and Beagle... in three volumes,* 1839, volume II. National Library of the Argentine Republic.

This type of image recognises a long tradition in which artists' search since the Renaissance for a faithful representation of reality converges, as well as the confidence in the effectiveness of images to contribute to the advancement of scientific knowledge. Images of human bodies and faces from the front and in profile became models that were disseminated in the following centuries in manuals for the use of artists and illustrators. The canon of proportions and beauty also allowed for the development of guidelines for the representation of their deviations. For this reason, old, sick and crazy bodies and faces formed part of the repertoire. In this way, the front and profile typology was established as the most suitable for use in the field of fine arts due to its didactic capacity, while from the 18th century onwards, and in a process that continued until the first decades of the 20th century, it demonstrated its plasticity.

when adopted in the fields of criminology and anthropology25. Its use in these engravings of *Narrative… is not by chance,* given the boom that physiognomy and phrenology had acquired at the time, and the interest of Fitz-Roy himself in these theories. Among other testimonies we have Darwin's account of his first interview with the commander of the Beagle, when he was on the verge of being rejected from taking part in the voyage, because of his features26.

Apparently, in England Fitz-Roy had the Fuegians examined by a phrenologist,

25 See Elizabeth Edwards, “Introduction,” in *Anthropology and Photography 1860-1920,* ed. Elizabeth Edwards (New Haven and London: Yale University Press/Royal Anthropology Institute, 1992).
26 Charles Darwin, *Autobiography,* 76. http://darwin-online.org.uk/ (accessed April 2, 2010).

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who made a detailed report of the results27 . It is very likely that he himself made the drawings that were transferred to the engraving plate, since his signature appears at the bottom left of the plate of the indigenous people from different groups, and although this is not repeated on the plate of the hostages, the similarity between the two and the personal commitment of the commander in the events that had them as protagonists is such that it is logical to assume that it is also due to him (Fig. 5). In tune with the teachings of Lavater for which the sailor felt such an affinity, the plates show those outstanding features of the face, as evidence of the character and personality of the individuals. In accordance with the correlation between the physical and the moral that both physiognomy and phrenology postulated, the features, character and personality were possible to mold.

The picture with the Fuegians who travelled to England shows the effects of the beneficial influence of education and environment on the appearance of such "miserable" beings. The pairs of portraits facilitate comparisons: between Fuegia Basket, who is presented on the top left as a young girl who has already become westernised, and Jemmy Button's wife, whose head of untidy hair is buried in her chest; and between Jemmy himself, who appears after the failure of Matthews' mission, reintegrated into his former life, next to his image as a boy dressed in European style and with his hair neatly cut. As regards York Minster, Fitz-Roy preferred to omit its primitive appearance and presents it as a pleasant gentleman from the front and in profile. In this sense, the image erases all reference to the stage before and after the brief passage through "civilization," which abound in the text, posing an interesting shift in meaning. There is nothing in these portraits of Fuegia and York that refers to the helpless appearance of the former shortly after being captured, or to the sullen and gloomy character and voracious appetite of the latter, which caught the attention of the crew when he was brought on board. The plate rather emphasizes the transformation which was already in effect in them at the initial moments of their experience among the English, when they were subjected to a kind of bodily discipline through hygiene and dress: "Fuegia, cleaned and dressed, was much improved in appearance […] York Minster was sullen at first […] but as soon as he was well cleaned and clothed […] he became much more cheerful"28.

Darwin does not seem to have had the same enthusiasm as FitzRoy for the educational experiment and the missionary project involving the hostages. 29 He was sceptical of the theories to which the commander subscribed. However, he was also interested in the externalisation of the so-called "movements of the soul", and many years after the voyage of the Beagle, in 1872, he published *The Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals,* in which he argued that facial expressions were derived from those of animals and were universal and common to all men. In volume III of *Narrative…,* Darwin was rather sparing about the hostages and the experience of their repatriation, but in other writings he narrates the events, provides descriptions of the natives and reflections on their nature, their evolutionary stage and their chances of survival. 30 For example, in a brief characterization of Fuegia, he plays with the double condition of the girl, "wild" and "civilized," and beneath the kind appearance and good manners learned in England, he guesses the survival of a primitive nature that is read on her face: "Fuegia Basket was a nice, modest, reserved girl."

27 According to Nick Hazelwood, "Cover Story", *Radar,* Buenos Aires Aires, April 20, 2005.

28 *Narrative,* volume I, 410.

29 Janet Browne, "Missionaries and the Human Mind. Charles Darwin and Robert Fitz-Roy", in *Darwin's Laboratory. Evolutionary Theory and Natural History in the Pacific,* ed. Roy McLeod and Philip F. Reh-bock (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994).

30 Darwin's lapidary opinion on the inhabitants is often cited. from Tierra del Fuego: "I believe, in this extreme part of South America, man exists in a lower state of improvement than in any other part of the world…" *(Narrative,* vol. III, 235). However, different ideas on this subject appear in letters, articles and other texts. After returning from the voyage, he was still able to publish a letter co-authored with Fitz-Roy, in which he subscribes to the idea that "that a savage is not irreclaimable, until advanced in life; however repugnant to our ideas have been his early habits". Robert Fitz-Roy and Charles Robert Darwin, "A letter Containing Remarks on the Moral State of Tahiti, New Zealand, &c.", *African Christian Recorder* 2, no. 4 (1836): 222. http://darwin-online.org.uk/ (accessed March 29, 2010).

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Fig. 6.
Boote & Co. Studio. *Chief Sayweke,* c. 1885. General Archive of the Nation, Argentina.

young girl, with a rather pleasing but sometimes sullen expression […]"31.

If we look again at the two plates with faces on a neutral background, we notice that there is a close relationship between them and those that present staged figures. Fitz-Roy took at least one of the heads from Martens, that of the "Yapoo" located in the center on the right, which derives directly from the "Fuegian (Yapoo Tekee-nica)" of the frontispiece of the volume (Fig. 2). In addition, he used the same resources as the experienced artist to account for the "backwardness" and "ignorance" of the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego: vacant looks, hunched torsos, shaggy hair, while to show the changes that had taken place in them he only had to add a bit of neck.

31 Charles Robert Darwin, *Journal of researches into the natural history and geology of the countries visited during the voyage of HMS Beagle round the world, under the Command of Capt. Fitz-Roy, R.N.* (London: John Murray, 1845), 220. The third volume of *Narrative,* originally called *Journals and Remarks,* went through several editions, also under the title *Voyage of the Beagle.* Among the Spanish editions, see Darwin, Charles, *Voyage of a Naturalist Around the World* (Buenos Aires: El Ateneo, 1945).

between the head and shoulders, raise the eyebrows, open the eyes and arrange the hair.

Front and profile: the object of study

We saw in the images drawn by Martens and engraved for the edition of the voyage of the Beagle a representation of the indigenous people as individuals who, although located in an extreme geography, can be redeemed from an "abject" condition through their education in Christian civilization. Other inflections of the white gaze on the indigenous people occurred throughout the 19th century. In accordance with these, they are represented as protagonists of large oil paintings with dramatic scenes of raids and captives, the paradigmatic example of which is *The Return of the Raid,* and as picturesque figures in albums of customs and traditions. To this repertoire is added the version of the indigenous people as objects that enable a scientific examination, evident in the new impulse that the typology of bodies and faces from the front and in profile took in the second half of the century, when it was adopted by different artists.

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disciplines such as criminology and anthropology, which sought the effective identification of the "specimens" to be studied. If in the pictorial discourse, with strong literary roots, repulsion and admiration for the horseman of the pampas are mixed in varying proportions, the set of photographs taken of some Tehuelches after the campaigns at the end of the century respond to the will of possession and "objective" investigation of the Indians. These photos are contemporary and correlative to those that began to be used in police and judicial spheres for the identification of criminals, together with anthropometric measurements and fingerprints. If we compare the photograph of the chief Sayhueque (Fig. 6) with any of those included in the *Gallery of Thieves,* published in 1887 for police use (Fig. 7), we can see that the same procedure and the same conventions are used: the face and part of the bust on a light neutral background, which allows for contrast with the naked or clothed body of the subject. On the other hand, the careful relationship between the shot and the proportions of the subject responds to the prescriptions disseminated by the Bertillion system, who had taken them from the Englishmen Thomas Huxley and John Lamprey. In the 1870s, they developed various methods that combined measurements and photographs to arrive at a standard photometric system32.

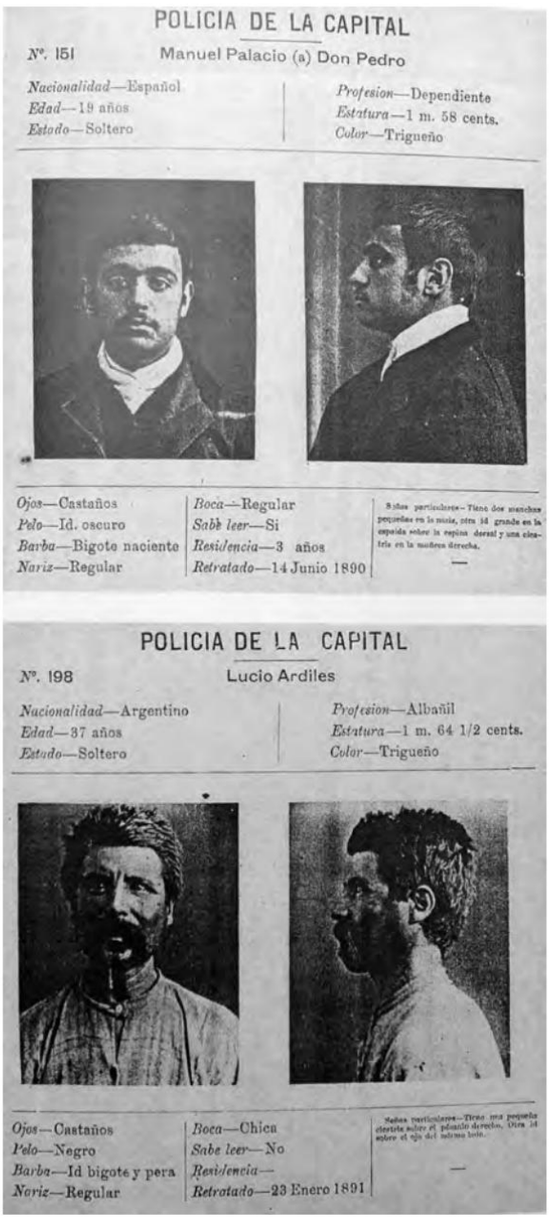

Fig. 7.
Photographs of the *Thieves Gallery,* Buenos Aires, 1887. Police Museum of the Argentine Republic.

The front and profile photographs of the Patagonian Indians were taken after the 1883 campaign and the final defeat of the last groups that still resisted the advance of the State on their territories. The members of these groups were taken to Buenos Aires "as prisoners." They lived for a time in Tigre, north of the city, and on Martín García Island in the Río de la Plata, where they were crowded into large barracks. Later, some returned to Patagonia and settled on land assigned by the State, or ended up in a museum, where they remained for a few years as a sort of living collection. This is the case of Inakayal and some of his family and friends (Fig. 8), which is illustrative of this.

the practices of manipulating the bodies of the defeated indigenous people in an objectifying sense33 . The presence of Inakayal and his group at the La Plata Museum, where they moved due to the intervention of its director Francisco P. Moreno, aroused from the beginning the interest of scholars and the general public. Apparently, although not with the publicity of the exhibitions of indigenous people in other places of the world, Inakayal and

32 Penhos, "Front and Profile," 33.

33 Penhos, "Front and Profile," 33-34.

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The others were exhibited as representative specimens of a breed in danger of extinction.34

The naturalist and adventurer Clemente Onelli, secretary to the museum director, described the chief's final moments in 1888. The poetic overtones of the text divert attention from the different versions of the event that were offered at the time, from suicide out of sadness to the punishment inflicted on him for having stripped naked in public by the anthropologist Herman ten Kate, who allegedly pushed Inakayal, causing his death. In any case, various procedures were carried out quickly after his death to transform the Tehuelche's body into study material: a mask was obtained in order to retain his features, his body was skinned, and his skeleton, skin, and skull were entered separately into the museum's collection. In 1994, a Tehuelche community claimed his remains, which were buried in Tecka, Chubut province, but in 2006 it was learned that the return had not been complete36.

It is clear that taking anthropometric photographs is an active part of this set of practices.

In fact, the outstanding characters of the

Fig. 8.
Boote & Co. Studio commissioned by Francisco Moreno, *Cacique Inakayal,* c. 1885. General Archive of the Nation, Argentina.

anthropology in Argentina, such as the aforementioned Moreno, and the Europeans Robert Lehmann-Nitsche and Herman ten Kate, were directly involved in their production and use, since they considered them valuable material for their research. Moreno commissioned the well-known studio Boote & Co. to take several in Tigre, while both Lehmann-Nitsche and ten Kate put together veritable archives with previous images and others that they themselves had taken37. The former completed the repertoire of the defeated Tehuelches with the photos of 23 Pilagá from Chaco, in the northeast of the country. To do so, he took advantage of the group's stay in Buenos Aires, on their way to Paris, where a businessman would take them to be exhibited at the Universal Exhibition of 1900, although they finally returned to their lands because they were denied permission to leave the country. The testimony of the German anthropologist is very suggestive about the way in which the photographer Carlos Bruch took the photos, in accordance with a protocol that included metric and descriptive data in *ad hoc forms,* and about how the plates were composed, placing several images to obtain an "anthropological atlas" and ensuring that for the observer "a single glance is enough to look at a large number of individuals at once"38. Thus, if on the one hand the photos of Indians and criminals sought to capture the image of an individual, at the same time they established an "average" or "human mean," as a term of the time expresses.

Within what we can understand as a broad disciplinary movement that focuses on

34 Among other cases that can be cited, in 1904 a businessman took a group of Selk'nam to the Universal Exposition of Saint Louis (United States), where they participated in the "staging" of Argentina along with another private enterprise, the display of Calchaquí objects, and the official shipment of industrial products and art; see Marta Penhos, "Saint Louis 1904. Argentina en Escena" (Saint Louis 1904. Argentina en Escena) in *Argentina en Muestra. Ferias y Exhibiciones durante los Siglos 19 y 20,* coordinated by María Silvia Di Liscia and Andrea Lluch, Colección Universos Americanos (Seville: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2009). On the exhibitions of human beings, see Peter Mason and Christian Báez, *Zoológicos humanos, fotografía de fueguinos y mapuche en el Jardin d'Acclimatation en París, siglo xix* (Santiago de Chile: Pehuén, 2006).

35 "One day, when the setting sun dyed the majestic propylaeum of that building purple […], supported by two Indians, Inacayal appeared up there, on the monumental staircase; he tore off his clothes, those of the invader of his homeland, bared his torso, gilded like Corinthian metal, made a gesture to the sun, another very long one towards the south; he spoke unknown words and, in the twilight, the burdened shadow of that old lord of the earth vanished like the rapid evocation of a world. That same night, Inacayal died, perhaps happy that the victor had allowed him to greet the sun of his homeland," quoted by Milcíades A. Vignati, *Aboriginal Iconography* (La Plata, National University of La Plata, 1942), I, 25.

36 For some aspects of this case see Irina Podgorny and Gustavo vo Politis, "What Happened in History? The Araucanian Skeletons in the La Plata Museum and the Desert Campaign," *Contemporary Archaeology,* vol. 3 (1990-1992); María Mercedes García Coll, *Old and New Ethnohistorical Studies* (Bahía Blanca: Universidad Nacional del Sur, 1999).

37 We have an eloquent testimony from ten Kate about the transfer of a group of Tehuelches to the La Plata Museum in 1890 to be photographed at the request of Moreno and himself; see Penhos, "Frente y perfil", 35.

38 Lehmann-Nitsche published the results of his observations on on the Chaco indigenous people in the Magazine of the Museum of La Plata in 1904; see Mariana Giordano, *Discourse and Image on the Chaco Indigenous People* (Resistencia: Ediciones al Margen, 2005), 104-106.

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Fig. 9.
Antonio Pozzo, *Pincén,* 1878. General Archive of the Nation, Argentina.

In the case of bodies that are outside the norm of order and progress, the photographic device plays a preponderant role. For nineteenth-century positivism, the machine, placed in a direct, immediate relationship with the thing or person whose image it is to record, was capable of capturing the material evidence of the facts. At that time, the indisputable correlation between photography and truth was postulated, and the use of the identification photo associated with the mechanisms of power was promoted in modern States.39 Criminals and indigenous people were observed, carefully measured and photographed, and the data was also recorded in brief, aseptic texts for better identification and study. Thus, in the dominant ideology of the time, the photographic image, stripped of any artistic pretension, collaborated in the verification of a tautological truth based on the existence of an order that the anomalous elements only confirmed. The photos were evidence of the facts, that is, proof that the somatic characteristics of criminals and indigenous people, frozen at the moment they were taken, were unalterable. By capturing a precise moment, the front and profile photo operates as a stoppage of time and

Fig. 10.
Inakayal, Foyel and Sayweke tribe, 1884. General Archive of the Nation, Argentina.

39 See John Tagg, *The Weight of Representation* (Barcelona: Gustavo Gili, 2005), especially chapter 3.

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Fig. 11.
Boote & Co. study commissioned by Francisco Moreno, *Members of the Inakayal, Sayweke and Foyel tribes,* c. 1885. National Archives, Argentina.

condensation of the contingencies associated with its development, which thus become definitive data.

Compared with other photos taken of indigenous people years before or at the same time (Figs. 9 and 10), the frontal and profile photos (Fig. 11) dispense with staging, presenting themselves as a "pure indication" of what they show. However, although in a subtle way, the iconicity of the photographic image is present in the neutral background, the close-up, the nakedness or clothing of the portrayed and other similar aspects that speak of an intention to produce an effect of reality. The somatic features are the physical evidence of biological data that respond to fixed laws, while in the case of the engravings of the Fuegians of the Beagle they can be understood as the external demonstration of

internal states subject to change through civilizing education. We must not think of the replacement of a conception that we could call romantic by another framed in positivism, but rather of a struggle around the perception and representation of the other that occurs in the field of ideas and

practices in different areas of production, circulation and use of images.

Front and profile: contemporary memory

In Argentina, as in other places in the world, the typology we are examining has remained in force well into the twentieth century in the field of anthropology. However, I am interested in pointing out other derivations. In its search for a reflection on particularly painful aspects of the past, Argentine documentary cinema in recent years has included or cited the

photos that we are analyzing. Andrés Di Tella presents a young Mapuche of today, front and side view, as the image of his short *El país del diablo* (2005) to introduce the spectator to the other side of the so-called "conquest of the desert" and to affirm the existence of current people who claim an indigenous identity in spite of the consecrated version of the whitest country in Latin America (Fig. 12). For his part, in the feature film *Tierra Adentro,* Ulises de la Orden reserves the nineteenth-century photos for the titles

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Fig. 12.
Poster for *The Devil's Country,* a documentary by Andrés Di Tella (75 min, 2008).

The photograph is presented in the final section, closing with a long and forceful visual reminder of the journey that it makes through the history and present of the inhabitants of Patagonia (Fig. 13). This type of recovery of the images from the front and in profile seems to propose a *memento* that, due to the genesis and use that the photos had at the time, refers to the violent actions against the indigenous people throughout Argentine history and to the second violence of their demonization or disappearance in more traditional historiography. The significant inversion that its new context supposes is based on the unstable and provisional truth of the photo. There is a trace, without a doubt, there is the certification of an existence, but that trace does not contain any irrefutable meaning40. The photo indicates that Sayhueque, Inakayal and all the people photographed as objects of study were in front of the camera when the photographer clicked the shutter.

However, the meaning that was once given to them is now undergoing a shift: they are no longer evidence of the irremediable backwardness of some human groups condemned to disappear according to the laws of evolution, but of the barbarism that devastated them.

On the international level, some visual artists are working on a similar path today. This is the case of Carrie Mae Weems, who in her series "From Here I Saw What Happened and I Cried" (1995-1996) takes photographs of black men and women from the 19th and 20th centuries from the Getty Museum archive to tell the story of the slave trade and the ultimate fate of its inhabitants.

40 Dubois, *The Photographic Act,* 68-69.

Fig. 13.
Poster for *Tierra adentro,* a documentary by Ulises de la Orden (103 min, 2011).

The artist's work is based on the work of Weems, who is a member of the group of descendants in a society that either segregated them or typified and exoticized them. The 33 photos are interspersed with texts: the first corresponds to a woman who posed in profile with her traditional hairstyle and ornaments. Weems added to the image the initial text of the story, *"From Here I* Saw What Happened." The second photograph is very similar, but the model is completely without clothes or any other reference to a culture. This operation of stripping, similar to that seen in the photos of indigenous people, leads directly to the meaning that the artist makes explicit in the text superimposed on the image: "You Became a Scientific Profile."41

Also based on an archive, in 2010 the Argentine photographer Marcelo Grosman presented the series "Guilty!", made with police photos of criminals that he placed on backgrounds of saturated colors, superimposing one on top of the other until he achieved an ambiguous, unstable portrait. As in the Lehmann-Nitsche operation, the individuality

41 See Carrie Mae Weems "From *Here* I Saw What Happened and I Cried 1995-1996." http://carriemaeweems.net/galleries/from-he-re.html (accessed December 15, 2012). I am grateful to Maria Delnegro for her observations on contemporary photography and for introducing me to Weems' work.

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Fig. 14.
Photographs of missing persons during the dictatorship during a march. Agra Collection , Active Memory Archive, extracted from http://elthot.wordpress.com/tag/golpe-militar/.

recedes and the archetype appears, but in the sense of the aforementioned "appearance bearing" which, as an inheritance from nineteenth-century positivism, is applied to certain people to attribute to them a potential criminality42.

But the use of frontal and profile typologies for the identification of people has long since spread from criminals to the general population. The frontal or three-quarter profile photo is an essential element in identity documents around the world. This

function is what allows us to take our journey to another case in the present and propose a turn with respect to what we have seen so far.

Indeed, it seems that, according to what we have reviewed, some images were condemned to be a representation of human perversity, the "indicative icon" of what some people have been capable of doing to their fellow men.

If we add to this the association between photography and death that Barthes showed so acutely, the frontal and profile photos "suggest that reality is dead and, at the same time, announce that it is going to die," and reinforce the idea that "every photograph is a *memento* mori"43. Does this typology have any other possibility than that of posthumous testimony?

The case of those who disappeared during the military dictatorship in Argentina has given rise, as Burucúa and Kwaitkowsky have forcefully expressed , to "endless perplexity" among historians and art historians, dedicated to "weaving the story of the representations of historical traumas in the modern world"44.

with images linked to state repression in the seventies and early twentieth century.

1980s in Argentina means assuming this perplexity and taking it as a starting point to try to read its meanings. Among these images, we are interested in the photographs of the identity documents. We probably used

by the repressors to identify and detain

42 See Marcelo Grosnan, "Guilty!". http://www.fostercatena.com/mues-tras/2010/guilty/ (accessed November 29, 2012).

43 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Note on Photography* (Barcelona: Paidós, 1992), 38-9; Sontag, *On Photography,* 32.

44 José E. Burucúa and Nicolás Kwaitkowsky, "Elpénor, the Pilgrim of Emmaus and the Missing Man: Painting and the Historical Problem of the Configuration of Life," *Boletín de Estética,* no. 20 (2012): 18. I came across this article when the main ideas of the present text were outlined, finding a coincidence that is not at all surprising, since I recognize in Burucúa one of my teachers.

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Fig. 15.
Notice in the newspaper *Página/ 12,*
Sunday, June 2, 2013, p. 6.

Those who were considered "outside the norm" have become part of a visual culture that claims them as a banner, actively joining the Marches of Resistance that took place from 1980, when in the midst of the dictatorship the mothers and grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo began to demand the appearance of their children alive (Fig. 14). The faces frozen in eternal youth indicate, it is true, that "this has been," but they also give corporeality and name to the absence and anonymity of the disappeared45. This lack of body and name, as is known, was one of the most systematic operations carried out by the military to block the necessary mourning and the elaboration of the tremendous social trauma experienced by the Argentines. Burucúa and Kwaitkowsky propose that the silhouette, the most commonly used resource for the representation of the missing46, it acts as a remedy for the lack of funeral rites that have been made impossible due to the removal of the bodies, thus contributing to completing the social configuration of unfinished lives47.

The disappeared return again and again to the living memory of Argentines in the advertisements published in the newspaper *Página/ 12* (Fig. 15). They are also evoked in "Geometry of Consciousness," a work by Chilean Alfredo Jaar for the Parque de la Memoria in Buenos Aires: using the empty silhouette of the faces of the disappeared in an immersive installation, Jaar involves the spectator and alerts him to the scope of what happened.

45 Something different, since it was taken during his captivity, is the case of the frontal photograph of Fernando Brodsky, of which his brother has made a moving description; see Marcelo Brodsky, "La camiseta" (The T-shirt), *Página/ 12* [Buenos Aires], November 1, 2011. Brodsky is a photographer with several works focused on the disappeared, for example, "Buena Memoria. Los Compañeros" (Good Memory. The Companions) (1996), an installation at the entrance of the Colegio Nacional de Buenos Aires in which an enlarged photograph of his class and the identification of those persecuted by the dictatorship were shown; see http://www.marcelobrodsky.com/intro.html (accessed May 24, 2011).

46 The "silhouette" was a collective artistic action that took place during the March of Resistance in 1983, when a group of artists, students and ordinary people produced silhouettes to protest for those detained for political reasons and to ask for the condemnation of the repressors. The urban intervention occupied a large part of the city and was repeated with variations in later marches, see Ana Longoni and Gustavo Bruzzone, *El Siluetazo* (Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo, 2008).

47 Burucúa and Kwaitowsky, "Elpénor", 22. Previously, Roberto Amigo proposed that the silhouettes made present the absence of the bodies in a kind of staging of state terror, "The aesthetic resistance: aesthetic actions in the Marches of the Resistance-power, 1984-1985", *Art and Power, 5th Conference on Theory and History of the Arts* (Buenos Aires: caia/FFyL-uba, 1993).

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in the recent past48. To do this, Jaar used photographs of victims of repression but also of contemporary Chilean citizens.

Here, the lack of features is anonymity in the sense that all of us, in certain historical-cultural contexts, can be placed by those who hold power in a radical otherness, objectified, alienated, estranged from the human condition. The location of the work in an underground chamber and the alternation of light and darkness that marks the viewer's perception are interpreted by Burucúa and Kwaitkowsky in terms of presence and disappearance, absence and memory, past time and present time.

Finally I will mention the series “Absent Looks”

The work of the Uruguayan Juan Ángel Urruzola, since it shows another possibility of appropriation of the front and profile photos. In Peluffo’s words, they are “faces [that] redefine the usual photographic typology of the state bureaucratic control over people, an issue that was taken to its most petty public use in the press of the military dictatorship”50. Urruzola works with identity photos of missing detainees in Uruguay and integrates them into the urban space of Montevideo. In this way, he restores the face to a place in the city that perhaps its owner could have passed through, exhibiting the photograph as an “other” presence, different in the thin materiality of the paper, in its inert persistence, to the warm and vital volume of the body that is not there51. In addition, the artist, who also suffered State repression, do, proposes something more: “In 1972, when the Uruguayan military arrested me, their first gesture was to put a hood on me. Others were blindfolded. All detainees had their gaze 'amputated'. It was forbidden to 'look', perhaps 'see' […]”52. Urruzola's work cannot give the missing people back that amputated gaze, but it can give them a new and indisputable capacity to constitute ourselves as subjects looking.53

The uses of the identifying image by human rights movements and in the field of visual arts, then, give a new layer of meaning to the set of images considered in this work. They confront us with our limits with respect to the imaginable, but they also claim themselves as something more than the trace of horror.54 Following Nancy's argument, they could be thought of as a "truth about truth," necessary representations of abysmal violence, no longer as a theme or "object" but as an "inscription."55

In the Beagle engravings, the image rescues the Fuegians from an announced disappearance, since as "savages" they had to be transformed into civilized individuals through education.

Anthropological photographs, for their part, involve the appropriation, as an object of study, of bodies disappeared by the State, of which the image is a “remnant.” And identification photos from the time of the dictatorship, later

48 See Alfredo Jaar. http://www.alfredojaar.net/index1.html (accessed April 18, 2012) and Alfredo Jaar, “Parque de la Memoria”. http://www.parquedelamemoria.org.ar/alfredo_jaar.pdf (accessed April 18, 2012).

49 Burucúa and Kwaitkowsky, “Elpénor”, 22.

50 Gabriel Peluffo Linari, “On the photographs and the intervention on the façade of Juan Angel Urruzola at the Cultural Centre of Spain”. http://www.cce.org.uy/index.php (accessed 14 December 2012). I would like to thank María Alba Bovisio for her commentary on Urruzola’s work.

51 Urruzola carried out an intervention at the Centro Cultural de España in Montevideo (2006), in which he also included photographs of victims of the Spanish Civil War. In 2008 he carried out an action called “Miradas ausencias en la calle” (Absent Looks in the Street) which consisted of papering different places in the city with large-scale reproductions of his works; see http://www.cce.org.uy/index.php (accessed December 14, 2012). In 2009 the artist exhibited another series, “Álbumes de la memoria” (Albums of Memory), in which tiny passport photos of missing persons serve as mosaics to compose a large-scale photo of one of them, playing with the tension between a individual and collective identity; see http://www.urruzola.net/juanangel.htm (accessed December 14, 2012).

52 Juan Ángel Urruzola, “Look and See”. http://www.cce.org.uy/index.php (accessed December 14, 2012).

53 Louis Marin argues that the power of the image as a re-effect Presentation has a double meaning, “of presentification of the absent –or the dead– and of self-representation that the subject of the gaze institutes in affect and meaning.” The quote is from *Les pouvoirs de l'image* (1993), Roger Chartier, *Escribir las prácticas. Foucault, de Certeau, Marin* (Buenos Aires: Manantial, 1996), 77-78.

54 Georges Didi-Huberman, *Images Despite Everything: Visual Memory of the Holocaust* (Barcelona: Paidós, 2004). In this work, the author takes up Walter Benjamin’s idea of “redemption of the image.”

55 Regarding the representation of the Shoah, Nancy proposes that “it is not only possible and legitimate, but in fact necessary and imperative, provided that the idea of ‘representation’ is understood in the strict sense that it must be.” This contains a critique of the notion of representation as mimesis, derived from an objectifying and instrumentalizing relationship between the subject who looks and that which is looked at and represented, which can even lead to stealing the death of the other; see Jean-Luc Nancy, *La representacion prohibida. Seguido de La Shoá: un soplo* (Buenos Aires: Amorrortu, 2006), 11, especially “La representacion prohibida” and “La muerte robada.”

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The images used by artists and human rights activists also refer to the disappearance of the portrayed subjects. The front and profile typology is thus associated with a common thread that allows us to link the cases and think of them as inflections of a history in which the agents of imperial projects (the members of the Beagle) and the national State acted as disappearing machines. In all three periods, the image was used as part of disciplinary practices, but given its capacity to give presence to the absent56 , it ends up subverting that function.

Let us then close the journey with the same image with which we began, that of Popper hunting Indians (Fig. 1). Didi-Huberman says that photography shows a "particular aptitude […] to stop the most violent desires for disappearance. […] Photography is associated for life with the image and with memory: it possesses, therefore, the eminent epidermal force of them"57. If, on the one hand, it is clear that the Fuegian in the foreground "has been" in Barthesian terms, and in that sense the "photographic act" does nothing more than parodically repeat the shot of the rifle that killed him, on the other hand "it is". The corpse, like a disturbing double, comes back to life every time we observe the photograph, and in that sense "it looks at us", creating a relationship – different from that tranquilizing one of the subject in front of an object – that leads to the awareness of emptiness as presence58. The posthumous nature of photography thus coexists with another dimension linked to its capacity to give renewed existence to the dead, and to ensure a transcendence that defies any tendency toward oblivion.

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56 The similarity that Barthes speaks of does not imply the truth of the pa- not only the truth of appearance, but precisely the truth of presence (Barthes, *Camera Lucida,* 153-157).

57 Didi-Huberman, *Images in Spite of Everything,* 43-44.

58 Georges Didi-Huberman, *What We See, What Looks at Us* (Buenos Aires) Aires: Manantial Editions, 1997).

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nDate of receipt: January 26, 2013
nEvaluation date: May 15, 2013
nApproval date: June 3, 2013

How to cite this article

Penhos, Marta. "Front and profile images, "truth" and memory. From the engravings of the Beagle (1839) and anthropological photography (late 19th century) to identification photos today." *Memoria y sociedad* 17, no. 35 (2013): 17-36.